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**Baker-Polito Administration Visits New State Police Homeland Security  
and Preparedness Division**

*Division provides dedicated homeland security law enforcement capacity*

**FRAMINGHAM** – Governor Charlie Baker, Lt. Governor Karyn Polito, Public Safety Secretary Dan Bennett and State Police Superintendent Colonel Richard McKeon today highlighted the recent creation of a new State Police division focused on combating threats to Massachusetts and the nation posed by extremists and narcotics traffickers, collecting and analyzing criminal intelligence, and protecting large-scale events and critical infrastructure.

The State Police Division of Homeland Security and Preparedness will consolidate and enhance counter-terrorism, opioid interdiction, and criminal intelligence operations currently spread throughout other divisions. The new, dedicated division will significantly increase the Department's effectiveness and efficiency in these mission areas. The FY18 budget signed by the governor created the new division and allowed for a new State Police Class of 145 recruits.

"To keep our communities safe, it is critical that the Commonwealth continually adapt to various threats facing our state and nation to ensure the highest level of public safety and a coordinated response for first responders," **said Governor Baker.** "By bringing the different elements of our homeland security operations under one command, we will enhance the ability for the State Police to coordinate, respond and protect the Commonwealth for critical incidents and threats like drug trafficking."

The new Division is commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Dermot Quinn and consists of two main sections, the Commonwealth Fusion Center and the Preparedness and Planning Section. Each section is under the command of a Major, who reports to the division commander, who in turn will report directly to the Colonel/Superintendent of the Department. The establishment of these sections as two integral and coordinated parts of the new division will allow for more fully dedicated and expanded efforts in these critical homeland security areas of operation.

“As a part of the 5<sup>th</sup> division, the Fusion Center will continue its efforts to assist in gathering, analyzing and disseminating information about criminal networks, including those involved in human trafficking,” **said Lt. Governor Polito**. “The new structure will also allow the State Police to be even more vigilant and informed as they work to disrupt and apprehend criminals involved in the exploitation of children.”

“With the degree of criminal complexity ever increasing, the Massachusetts State Police will continue to evolve and build an organization whose structure and capacities can meet and overcome the challenges that threaten our safety, security, and way of life,” **said Secretary Bennett**.

“The emerging threats and issues that we now confront demand a stronger, modernized, and wholly-dedicated homeland security and preparedness law enforcement capacity,” **Colonel McKeon said**. “This Department is uniquely suited – and prepared – to embrace this responsibility and the establishment of this Division will provide the platform to minimize the risk posed by the threats facing us.”

Colonel Richard McKeon noted that the mission of the Massachusetts State Police has continually evolved to meet contemporary challenges throughout the agency’s 151-year history. Since Sept. 11, 2001, the role of the State Police has grown significantly in the area of homeland security, criminal intelligence, and counter-terrorism. That mission remains a major priority of the department. Most recently, faced with the continuing opioid crisis, the Department has increased its efforts to identify and dismantle drug trafficking organizations, focusing on the transportation of narcotics into and across Massachusetts, which is in itself a threat to homeland security. Both of those missions – counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics – will be enhanced by the new division structure.

#### **About the New State Police Homeland Security and Preparedness Division**

The Commonwealth Fusion Center, which previously existed under the Division of Investigative Services, will more appropriately fit into the Division of Homeland Security structure. One of its major functions is to collect and analyze intelligence on

criminal and terrorism activity and then share that information among federal, state and local partner agencies to facilitate an appropriate law enforcement response. The Fusion Center also will field units tasked with interdicting organizations trafficking opiates into and throughout Massachusetts, investigate potential terrorist activity through State Police membership on the Joint Terrorism Task Force, and investigate cybercrime.

The Preparedness and Planning Section of the new division will centralize law enforcement response planning for critical incidents and natural disasters, and security planning for large-scale events, such as the Boston Marathon, the July 4<sup>th</sup> concert and other Esplanade events, Sail Boston, major sporting events, and public celebrations. This planning, the responsibility for which is currently dispersed throughout the department, will now be centralized and streamlined. The planning duties, by personnel whose roles will be dedicated to this task, will encompass drafting operational plans, determining necessary staffing, erecting appropriate physical security barriers, and other logistical details for events, venues, and large gatherings.

The Preparedness and Planning section within the new division will also staff and maintain a 24-hour statewide Watch Center that will monitor all developing incidents affecting public safety and security and coordinate appropriate law enforcement response across different jurisdictions and agencies. The Watch Center is being built-out within the existing State Police General Headquarters (which will, in fact, house most of the new division with the exception of the existing Fusion Center units currently based in Maynard).

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